Dear Mary,

8/27/72

I wish I could take your silence as something other than that you have nothing good to say. Anyway, I hope other things account for it.

If my recollection is not faulty, one of the Dallas papers uses to New York Times Service and will have had all or enough of today's Graham story for you to know how bad things turned out. I haven't seen the story yet, but a correspondent, one of those good friends on whom I long ago tested my own apprehensions, phoned me this morning. He is a British correspondent and this was his working Sunday. We were on the phone I guess longer than an hour. You will see what he said and more when Paul sends you a copy of what I wrote. I couldn't make enough copies even though I used new carbon paper. (This is NOT a hint. I bought a large supply of a good brand when I could get it cheap and it just is pale, so don't send me any and if you don't listen to me and do, which I don't want you to, I'll only give it to Lil for the really important things where we need clear copies.)

The worst part is that I underestimated, not over-estimated. With or without counsel, Cyril has gone raving mad in what he has demanded. Pray that they are obdurate enough not to do what he wants, for if they do, we are even worse off.

My own fears have not been secret from anyone. It is now 5:30 p.m., and I tell you that nobody has phoned me to ridicule me or them, so they are either remarkably restrained or are learning about horses and barn doors, as fools learn, too late.

But I encourage you not to be discouraged. Not yet, at least. If I stayed out of all of this inside the (ugh) "critical" community, save for encouraging Howard to do what he thought right, regardless of what he considered my personal interest, and trying to make Sylvia, Gary and Jerry confront what they had done, I also wrote a few letters that, long ago as they were written, may cause one or two people to think in a way that may yet be helpful. And I have made a few other preparations, like laying legal foundations (naturally, without assistance from the lawyers amongst us), in the event it becomes necessary and possible to resort to them.

Meanwhile, if you have seen Graham's story, in any form, don't take it as gospel, even where politically you may find it congenial. In many places it lacks fidelity.

Lil has been having one of her bad days, worse than the usual daily headache and enough dizziness so that from time to time I've had to guide her. So, she has been a settin and a knittin. She has just started a new afghan. If I counted right, it will be eight attractive shades of green. I think she has one put aside that is shades of violet. Know anybody who would find the winter that is coming more comfortable with one?

We do hope things are in some way looking up for you. Our best to everyone,

sincerely,